

US given heads up about newspaper data destruction

July 11 2014, by Jack Gillum



This June 6, 2013 file photo shows a sign outside the National Security Agency campus in Fort Meade, Md. The Obama administration knew in advance that the British government would oversee destruction of a newspaper's hard drives containing leaked National Security Agency documents last year, newly declassified documents show. The White House had publicly distanced itself from doing the same against an American news organization. (AP Photo/Patrick Semansky, File)

(AP)—Newly declassified documents show the Obama administration knew in advance the British government would oversee destruction of a newspaper's hard drives containing leaked documents.

Britain's Guardian newspaper was forced last year to destroy the data containing classified documents leaked by former National Security Agency contractor Edward Snowden.

The White House had said that taking the same action against a U.S. news organization would likely be inappropriate. Yet emails obtained by The Associated Press show the NSA knew about the destruction and appeared to call it "good news."

The Guardian's top editor says he chose to destroy the drives rather than risk his newspaper being shut down by British authorities.

The White House said Thursday that the British government had acted on its own in destroying the Guardian data.

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Citation: US given heads up about newspaper data destruction (2014, July 11) retrieved 1 September 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-07-newspaper-destruction.html>

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